THE VENGEANCE OF SKELETOR™

MASTERS

OF THE UNIVERSE®

ILLUSTRATED BOOK WITH PURCHASE

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Of all the beings of the planet Eternia, none was as evil as skull-faced *Skeletor.* There was no good in him.

He stood defiantly on the rim of an active volcano, and using his energy-blade, he dared to fight with the lightning that flashed about him. The hatred in his heart was as searing as the volcano's belching smoke.

"I thirst for vengeance!" *Skeletor* shouted, as the sky

 responded with a loud crash of thunder.

Skeletor's mind was tormented by hated images. "It is because of *He-Man* that I have, time and time again, suffered shameful defeat!" he roared. "I would have succeeded in my attempt to rule this planet if not for him and his noble companions-in-battle."

As he spoke, *Skeletor* also thought of *Teela*, the beautiful warrior-goddess, and of armored *Man-At-Arms*, the master of all weapons.

At that moment, *Skeletor* made the only decision that was open to him. If he was going to rule Eternia, he had to destroy his worst enemy. *He-Man* must die!

With the mystic power of his energy-blade, *Skeletor* sent his image to his two most obedient underlings. Soon, his ghostly face appeared in Eternia's densest jungle.

"Beast Man," said the image, "I have work for you!"

"I am coming, master," roared the apelike brute.

The image also appeared in another domain, that of *Mer-Man, Skeletor's* scaly underling of the sea.

"What do you command me to do, master?" asked *Mer-Man,* humbly submitting to his master's will.

"You are to go to *Castle Grayskull,*" answered the scheming *Skeletor.* "It is there that I shall tell you exactly what you must do...and you will do it!"

"I will be there," replied *Mer-Man.*

The three sinister beings met in the shadow of *Castle Grayskull,* that ancient place of wonders that was built by unknown hands sometime before the Great Wars.

"We are here to serve you," grunted *Beast Man.*

"What you command, we shall do," added *Mer-Man.*

"*You will seek out He-Man,* and then," *Skeletor* almost smiled, "before he can use one of his super-weapons against you, *you will destroy him!*"

Les trois êtres sinistres se rencontrérent dans l'ombre de Castle Grayskull, cet ancien lieu des merveilles qui fut construit par des mains inconnus quelque temps avant les Grandes Guerres.

"Nous sommes ici pour vous servir," grogna Beast Man.

"Ce que vous ordonnez, nous l'exécuterons," ajouta Mer-Man.

"Vous irez dénicher He-Man, et ensuite," Skeletor sourit presque," avant qu'il puisse se servir de l'une de ses super-armes contre vous, vous le détruirez!"

Soon afterwards, a fantastic vehicle sped across the craggy terrain on a cushion of air. Riding the *Battle Ram* was *He-Man*, dressed in the suit that made his already great strength stronger. His thoughts were of *Teela*, whom he was to meet at a place around the next bend.

He-Man could not know that two fiendish beings were waiting for him in ambush. When he heard their screams it was already too late for him to battle back.

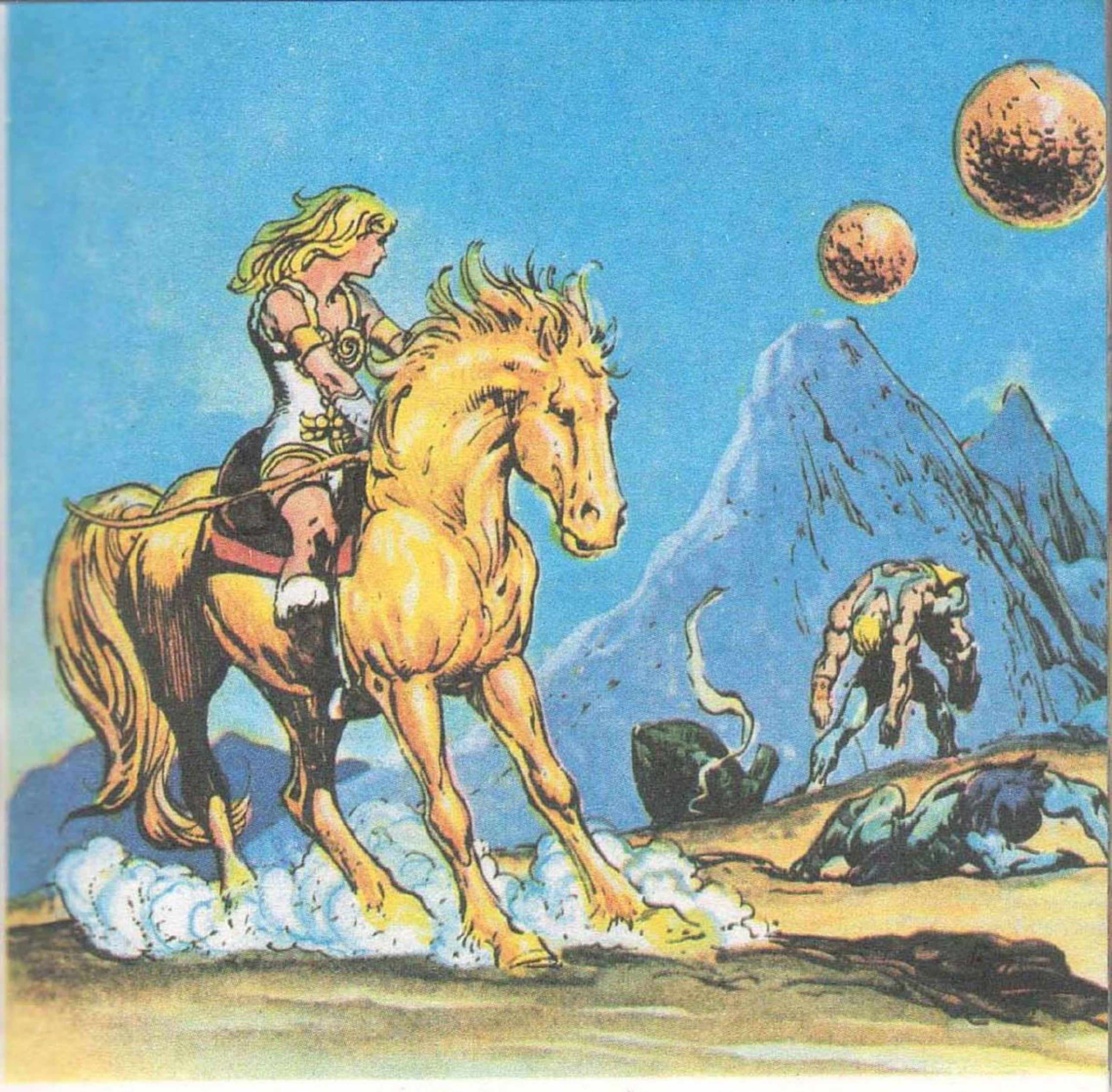
Peu après, un véhicule fantastique fila à toute vitesse à travers le terrain accidenté, soulevé par un coussin d'air. A la conduite du Battle Ram se trouvait He-Man, habillé d'un costume qui renforçait encore plus sa force déjà énorme. Ses pensées étaient fixées sur Teela, qu'il devait rencontrer à un endroit situé après le prochain tournant.

He-Man ne pouvait savoir que deux êtres méchants l'attendaient dans une embuscade. Lorsqu'il entendit leurs cris perçants, c'était déjà trop tard pour lui de riposter.

With incredible speed and force, *Mer-Man* kicked *He-Man* from the *Battle Ram,* then he jumped aside. *He-Man* recovered quickly, grabbed *Mer-Man* and tossed him toward a rock. Then *Beast Man's* weapon blazed.

"You two never learn!" said *He-Man,* as he sidestepped some of the blast from *Beast Man's* weapon.

However, *He-Man's* boast was cut short by another burst from *Beast Man's* powerful weapon.



The sounds of the battle were heard beyond the ridge. *Teela*, riding her galloping horse, arrived on the scene to see *Beast Man* regaining his senses. But what concerned her the most was Mer-Man who had *He-Man* across his shoulder. *He-Man* was unconscious, perhaps dead.

"There is nothing we can do now," *Teela* said to her steed, "but wait and hope that *He-Man* still lives." She held great fear in her heart.

For many miles, *Mer-Man* carried his burden, and never once did *He-Man* move. At last, as dawn's light crept over the land, the scaly servant of *Skeletor* reached his destination. The sea was choppy and angry.

"I never looked for it," *Mer-Man* laughed, as he tossed *He-Man* into the cold water, "but I've heard that there is no bottom in this sea. It would be interesting to learn if it is true, but you will not be the one to tell!"

If *Mer-Man* had not run off to report his success to *Skeletor,* he could have witnessed a miracle taking place below the water.

The icy waters quickly revived *He-Man,* but as his eyes opened, he beheld a new terror. A monster of the depths was swiftly making its way through the water.

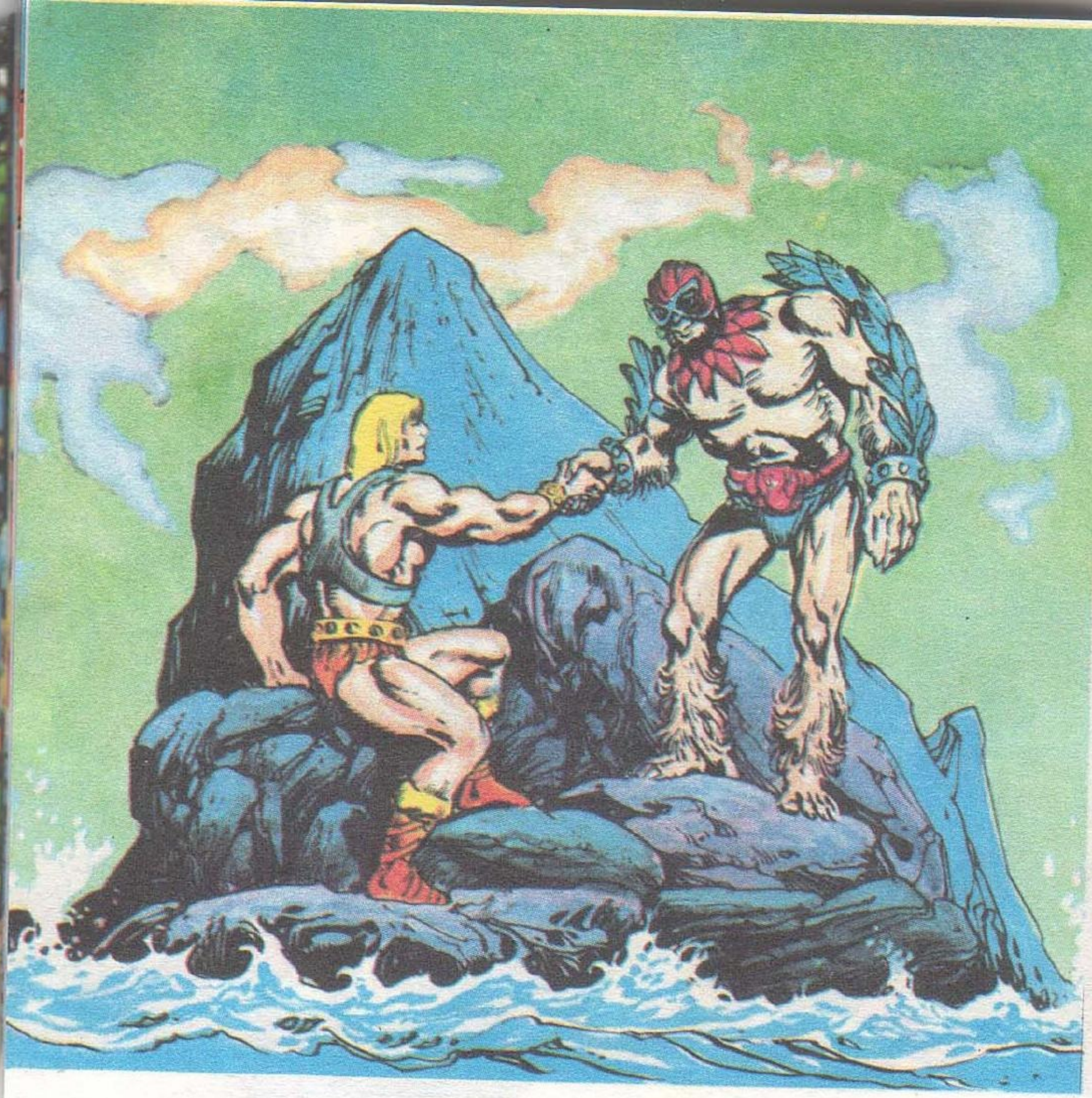
Holding his breath, *He-Man* fought his way to the surface for air, as the terrible thing swam after him.

He-Man fought for his life. But despite his super-human strength, he felt his power leaving him. The monster's tentacles wrapped tighter and tighter, and *He-Man's* life was being squeezed to an end.

Yet, as *He-Man* struggled there was another inhabitant of this domain who had vengeance in his blood. It was *Stratos,* the winged-lord, and like *He-Man* and *Teela,* he fought on the side of good.

"Hold on for just a few moments longer," shouted *Stratos,* as he dived into the icy water, following his weapon's path. The weapon had released a stream of flame that not even the sea could put out. *He-Man* felt the tentacles relax and pull away from his body.

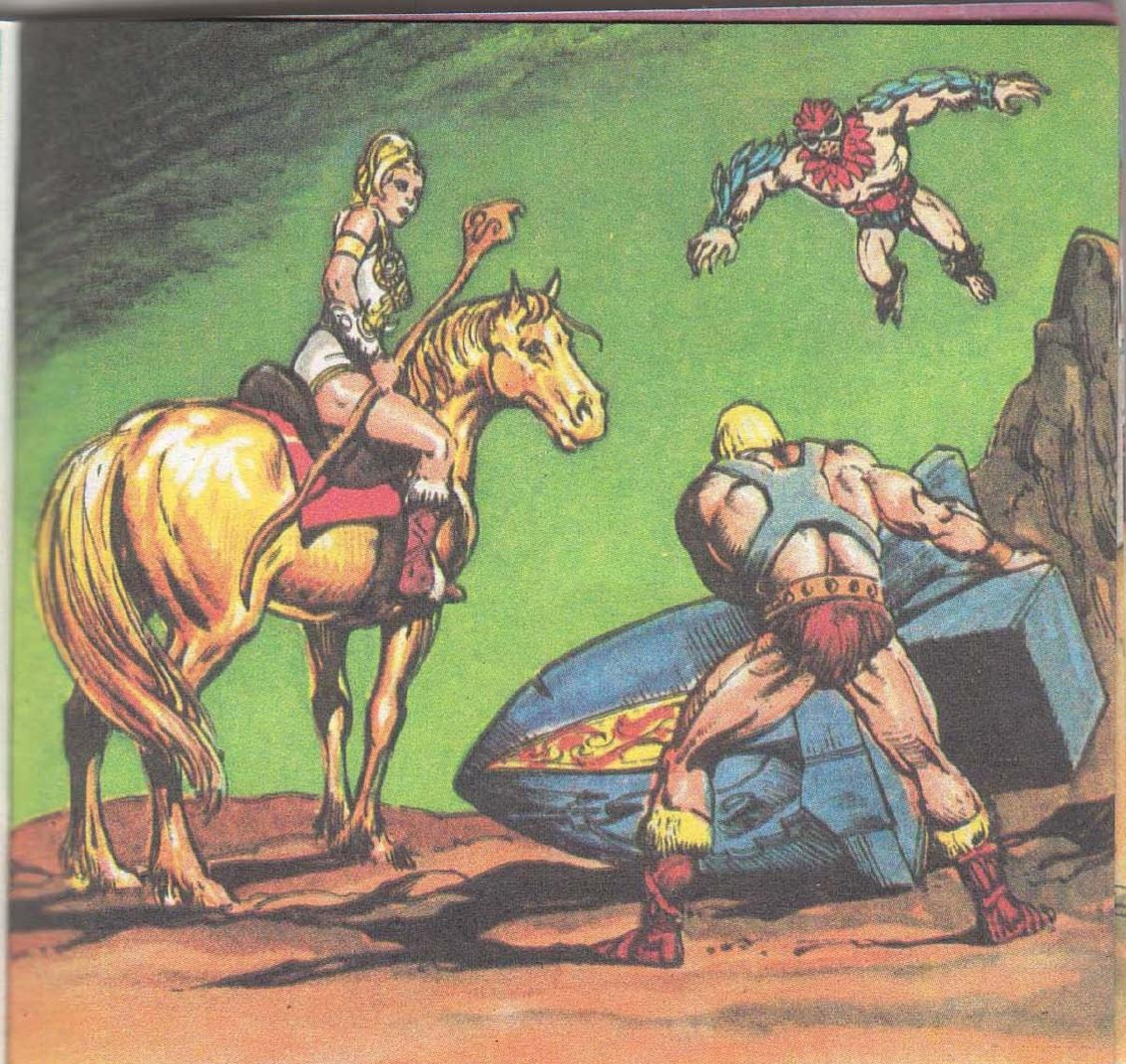
Then, weak and in need of breath, *He-Man* sank in the water. But *Stratos* dived deeper too, and pulled *He-Man* to the surface, and airlifted him to shore.



When *He-Man* regained his breath, he was resting on an island of stone. "Those assassins left me for dead. No doubt *Skeletor* is already laughing over my death!"

Stratos grinned. "Then perhaps it is time for us to show *Skeletor* just *who* will enjoy the last laugh," he said as he offered *He-Man* his warrior's grip.

"*Teela* must be worried," *He-Man* spoke. "If she saw the ambush, she must think I am dead!"



"Thank the Universal Powers that you are alive!" *Teela* exclaimed. "Tell me what happened."

After *He-Man* explained the events of the night, He changed into his suit that generated its own forcefield.

"We must go after those evil ones," vowed *Stratos*, "if we are to find out who is laughing."

"Beast Man ran off toward *Castle Grayskull*," said *Teela*. "I am sure *Mer-Man* went there, too."

At the castle, *Skeletor* enjoyed every grisly detail about *He-Man's* defeat. "How sweet is my revenge!" he shouted. "Now nothing can stop my plans of conquest! At last the one who threatened me is now cold fish food at the bottom of the sea!"

"Cold? Would you care to feel my temperature, *Skeletor*?" mocked the familar voice of *He-Man*.

Turning, *Skeletor* saw the foe he believed to be dead.

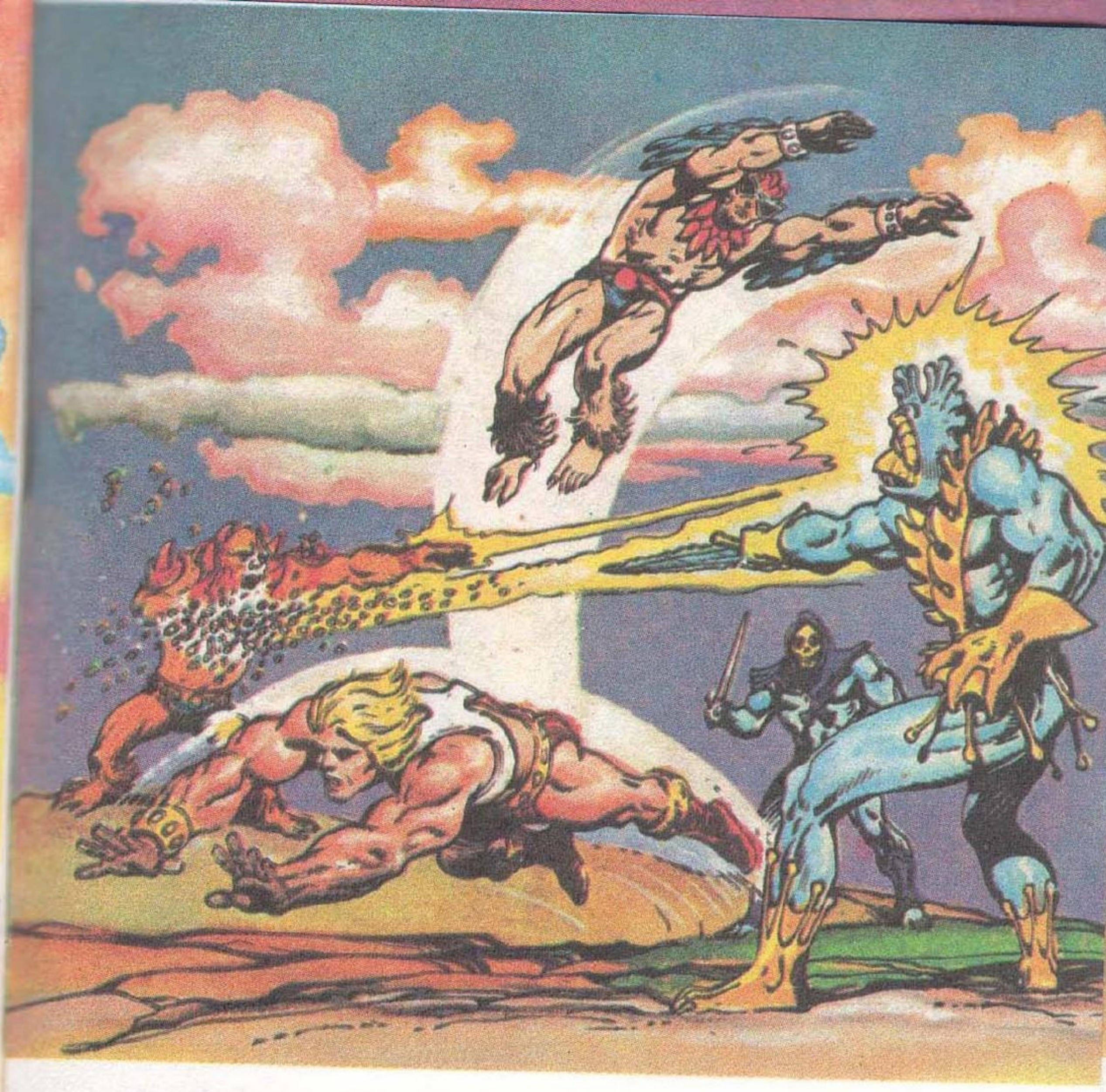
"I don't know how you escaped death," raved *Skeletor.* "But you will not do so again! *Slay* him and his friends! Now! Do it!" *Skeletor's* command was firm.

Beast Man, Skeletor's number one underling, leaped with the prowess of a great forest ape. However, his dull-witted mind had forgotten *He-Man's* forcefield.

And as *Beast Man* fell with a loud thud, *Mer-Man* was making his own attack. *Teela* was in grave danger.

Before *Stratos* could complete his defense, *Mer-Man* yelled defiantly, "This is where the sea conquers the sky!" *Mer-Man's* weapon shot out a stream of sea water that instantly cooled to ice.

His wings too heavy to keep him in the air, *Stratos* aimed his body at *Mer-Man.* "If I must fall, I will take you with me," he shouted. He fell fast, hitting the man of the sea with a mighty impact.

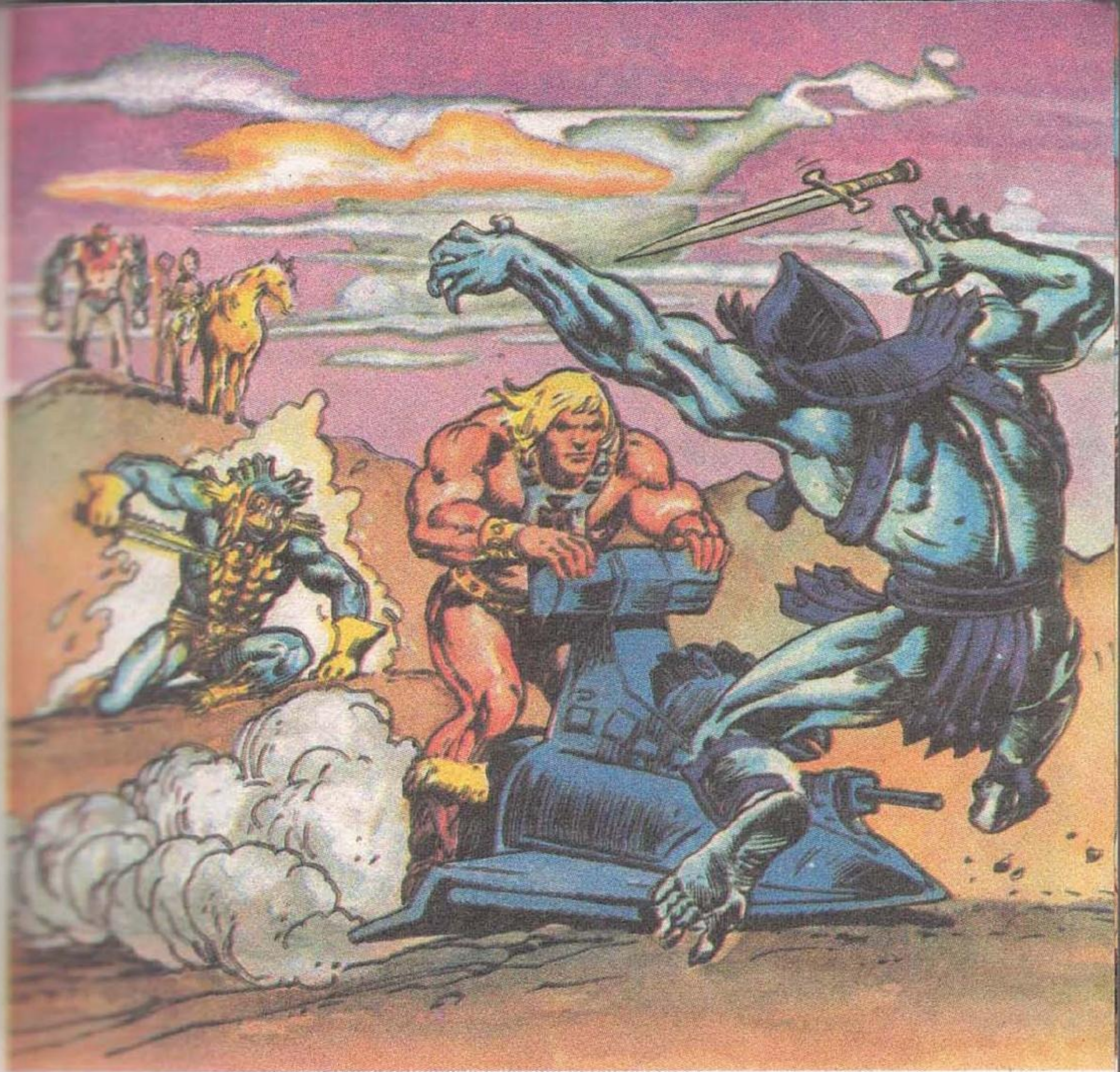


Beast Man was still determined to please *Skeletor.* Reviving, he arose with a mean growl, beat his chest and raised his weapon toward Stratos. "Now you die!" he growled, "then the rest of you will die, too!"

Mer-Man did not want to be outdone by *Beast Man,* and he aimed his weapon at *He-Man,* who jumped aside. However, *Mer-Man's* icy weapon found a target and *Beast Man* was caught in a barrage of pellets.

After *Skeletor* saw his two most powerful henchmen fall, he turned to the sea-being and shouted. "You bungling fools. You should have blasted *Stratos*! Now you will feel *my* fire – both of you!"

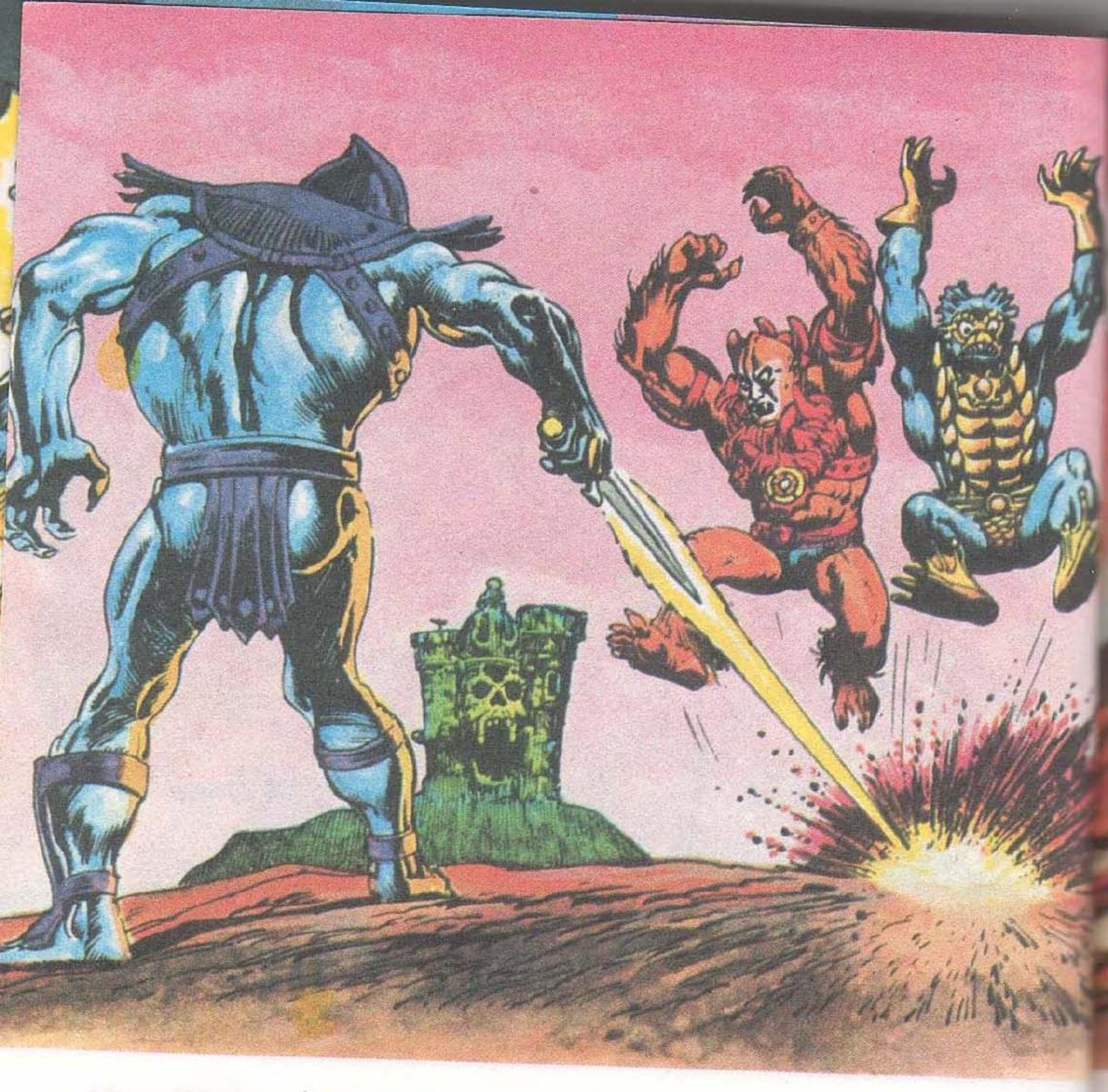
From *Skeletor's* weapon came a blast that enveloped *Mer-Man's* sea-bred body. So intense was the heat that it dried up the moisture in *Mer-Man's* scaly hide and the man of the sea felt himself slowly dying.



As much as *He-Man* hated *Skeletor,* he hated more to see a master do harm to a slave. Mounted on the *Battle Ram, He-Man* collided with *Skeletor,* disarming him.

And *Mer-Man* lost no time using what strength he had left to turn his own weapon on himself. Bathed in the sea water that would restore his strength, he gloated to himself, "You will regret this favor, *He-Man*!"

Teela and *Stratos* watched in disbelief.



Minutes passed, and finally a battered *Skeletor* got up to find his henchmen looking at him strangely.

"Before you think of rising up against me, you foolish underlings, consider this!" *Skeletor* shouted.

Whatever thoughts the two might have had were soon forgotten, as a blast of energy from *Skeletor's* weapon exploded under their feet.

"Master! You are the master!" they yelled together.

"Thank you, 'Master!'" mocked *He-Man*, "for giving us such a great idea." Then together, *He-Man, Teela* and *Stratos* trained their weapons on the villains, sending them fleeing like cowards from *Castle Grayskull.*

"No doubt they will invent new plots of evil," said the *Spirit of the Castle,* appearing. "But you, the *Masters of the Universe,* will be ready for them."

"Indeed, we shall be!" agreed *He-Man* with fervor!

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